

PART 9

EXTRAS

A WORD ABOUT THE QS CD-ROM

Included with the QS6.1 is a CD-ROM containing various useful software programs to use with your QS6.1. These include various Alesis and third-party programs, QS6.1 sounds and samples, sequences stored in the MIDI Song File (SMF) format, plus demonstration software we thought you would find interesting. Most of these programs are provided in both Macintosh[™] and IBM[®] PC formats.

SOUND BRIDGE[™]

Among the files contained on the CD-ROM is a software program called Sound Bridge[™]. Sound Bridge is a sound development utility which compiles custom samples from a variety of sources into the QS Synthesis Voice format, and downloads the compiled data to an Alesis PCMCIA Flash RAM Sound Card via MIDI Sysex to a QS-series synth, DM Pro Drum Module, Nano Tracker, QuadraSynth Plus Piano or S4 Plus. Sound Bridge allows individuals and sound developers to make their own Sound Cards, using whatever samples they want. Sound Bridge makes this possible without having a PCMCIA card burner attached to your computer. All you need is one of the aforementioned synthesizers or rack units.

Sound Bridge creates a QS Voice (multi-sample) by loading Digidesign Sample Cell I or Sample Cell[™] II format Instrument files. Using this format, Sound Bridge is able to determine key group and velocity group split points, root notes, sample playback rates, tunings, start points, loop points, and loop tunings. Sound Bridge can also create QS Voices without Sample Cell Instruments by loading single sound files in a variety of formats.

Sound Bridge does NOT require Sample Cell[™] hardware. The Sample Cell Instrument file, or sample file, may be loaded directly into Sound Bridge from any disk (i.e. your QS CD-ROM, floppy disk, hard disk, etc.). For example, a user may load data from a Sample Cell-compatible CD-ROM and send this data to one of the aforementioned Alesis unit's PCMCIA Card without using Sample Cell inbetween.

The Sound Bridge folder on the CD-ROM contains the Sound Bridge application, and an electronic manual which will give you all the information you need to know to run Sound Bridge.

Make sure you pay attention to how to set things up on your Mac or PC so that you can transfer files at up to four times the speed of MIDI! This will lop a lot of time off of transmitting huge files to your synth. Again, the CD-ROM tells you all about this.

USING PCMCIA EXPANSION CARDS

The QS6.1 provides two PCMCIA EXPANSION CARD slots, [A] and [B], which are found on the rear panel. These accommodate Alesis QCards and RAM cards. The RAM Card is a type of PCMCIA SRAM or FlashRAM card. We currently offer one which has 512K of memory and will store 8 complete banks. Larger Flash RAM cards can store up to 8MB of sample data using Alesis Sound Bridge software. Each PCMCIA Expansion Card slot can house a card with up to 8 Mb of RAM, for a total of 16 additional megabytes of sound storage.

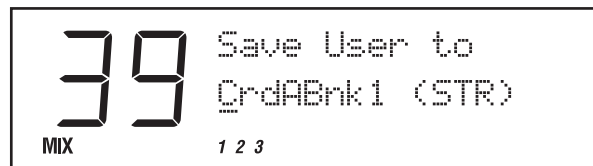
The QCards are ROM cards, which stands for Read-Only Memory. This means that you can't store ("Write") to them. So the kind of card you need to use for that sort of operation is an SRAM or Flash RAM card.

Note: The cards must be Type 1 PC cards (PCMCIA), and must be either AMD-C series or -D series FLASH cards (or fully compatible). Any SRAM card should work. Many different card sizes from 256K to 8 Megabytes are supported; just make sure they are 5-volt read/write only, and have an access time of 150 nanoseconds or faster.

SAVING THE USER BANK TO A PCMCIA CARD

The entire contents of the QS6.1's User memory (100 Mixes and 128 Programs) can be stored to an Alesis PCMCIA RAM card inserted into card slot [A] on the QS6.1. Depending on the amount of RAM a particular card has, up to 8 complete banks can be stored onto it.

- ① Insert a card into Sound Card slot A on the back of the QS6.1. Alesis recommends that you use card slot A for all RAM card storage operations.
- ② Press [STORE].
- ③ Press [◀ PAGE] three times.
This selects the "SAVE TO CARD" option. The display will look like this:



- ④ Use the [CONTROLLER D] slider or the [VALUE] buttons to select a bank location on the card to store to (A1–4, etc.).
If the card contains a ROM bank, it will show as Bank 1 and you will be unable to store to it.
- ⑤ Press [STORE] to transfer the user bank data from the QS6.1 onto the card.

If the display reads "CARD A IS WRITE PROTECTED.", switch the write-protect switch on the card to off and repeat the procedure.

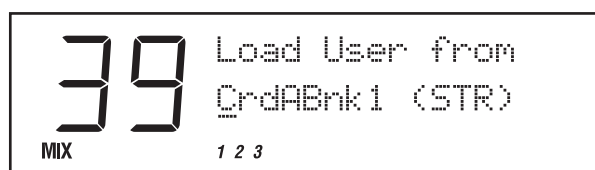
LOADING A BANK FROM AN EXTERNAL CARD

The QS6.1 can access Program and Mix data directly from a card by using the [BANK] buttons. However, there may be an instance where you want to load a full bank from a RAM card into the User bank.

WARNING! This procedure will overwrite the entire contents of your User bank. There is no Undo function! So be sure this is really what you want to do.

To overwrite the User bank with a Card bank, use this procedure:

- ① Insert the card into the card slot on the back panel.
- ② Press [STORE].
- ③ Press [◀ PAGE] twice.
This selects the "LOAD FROM CARD" option. The display will look like this:



- ④ Use the [CONTROLLER D] slider or the [VALUE] buttons to select the bank on the card you wish to load (A1–A4, etc.).
- ⑤ Press [STORE] to transfer the data from the card into the QS6.1.

STORING AN INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM OR MIX

You also have the option of storing a Mix or Program directly to a specific location in a RAM Sound Card Bank (instead of transferring the entire Bank) and vice versa. However, the Sound Card you are storing to must be of the current QS6.1 Bank format. A Sound Card is formatted whenever an entire QS6.1 Bank is stored onto it. If you are using an older QuadraSynth Sound Card that does not use the current Bank format, you will not be able to store individual Mixes or Programs onto it until you store an entire QS6.1 Bank onto it first.

- ① Insert a card into PCMCIA Card slot A on the back of the QS6.1. Alesis recommends that you use card slot A for all RAM card storage operations.
- ② Select the Program or Mix you wish to transfer to the card.
- ③ Press [STORE].
- ④ Use the [BANK] buttons to select a bank location on the card to store to (A1–A4). *If the card contains a ROM bank, it will show as Bank 1 and you will be unable to store to it.*
- ⑤ Use the [00] – [120] and [0] – [9] buttons to select a location in the selected card Bank to save to (000–127 if storing a Program; 00–99 if storing a Mix).
- ⑥ Press [STORE] to transfer the data from the QS6.1 onto the card.

If the card is write-protected, or not inserted, or not of the current Bank format, the display will indicate the situation with an error message. If the card is not of the current Bank format, use the “Save To Card” command first (see previous page) to save the entire User Bank to the card. This however will erase all Programs and Mixes in the selected card Bank. If these are important to you, first load them into the User Bank in the QS6.1, and then save them back onto the card in order to re-format the card using the new format.

LOADING AN INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM OR MIX

You can load a single Mix or Program from a Sound Card into the User Bank, instead of having to load the entire Bank from the Sound Card. To do this, select the Mix or Program in the Sound Card Bank that you wish to copy, then use the Store Function (as described above) to designate a location you wish to store to in the User Bank.

Note: When storing a Mix from a Sound Card into the User Bank, the individual Programs used by the Mix will not be moved into the User Program Bank. Once you store a Mix from a Sound Card into the User Bank, it will still look for its Programs in the Sound Card Bank, if that is where it was programmed to look for them in the first place (which is frequently the case).

Note: If the Mix or Program you wish to transfer uses samples that reside on a ROM card in slot A or B, you must have the ROM card in that same slot after the transfer in order for that portion of the Program or Mix to sound the same (or at all).

CARD STORAGE RAMIFICATIONS

It's not uncommon for someone to keep ROM cards in both slots A and B, create their own Mixes which access Programs from both cards, and use a RAM card in Slot A to occasionally to back up their User bank. In this case, there are a few considerations:

Whenever you transfer an internal Bank to a RAM card, the result is that all Mixes in the transferred Bank are changed so that they now access the Programs on the card bank to which the User bank was saved (since they reside there, now), instead of the Programs from the original internal Bank. And, when a Card Bank is transferred to an internal Bank location, the opposite happens – all Programs within a Mix which had previously accessed card bank 1 (for example) now point to the User bank.

However, a problem can arise when you have one or more Mixes in the Bank you are transferring which use Programs from a ROM card in slot A. *Example:* Let's say Mix 00 in the User Bank is made entirely of Programs that are located on Card A Bank 1 (the ROM card). If the ROM card is taken out of slot A, a RAM card is inserted, and the User Bank is transferred to the RAM card's Bank 1, the result will be that Mix 00 in Card Bank 1 now uses only Programs from Card Bank 1. If later you transfer the entire Bank back into the QS6.1, you will find that Mix 00 no longer uses Programs from the Card as it was originally programmed to do.

Here are a few ways to avoid this problem. First, always transfer to a Card Bank that does not include any Programs used by the Mixes in the User Bank. If in the previous example we had transferred the Bank into Card Bank 2, we would not have had a problem, since the Mix would still be using the Programs in Card Bank 1.

Another way to avoid this problem is to transfer the User Bank to a Card Bank, and then immediately store the individual Mix to that same bank on the Card by itself. When a Mix is stored individually to a Card in slot A, it is not modified in any way ; i.e. if it used Programs in the internal Banks, it will still use them even though the Mix and its Programs are in two different locations (the Mix is on the Card but the Programs it uses are stored in the internal Banks).

Finally, you could avoid this situation by always making sure your User Mixes use only Programs located in the User Bank (or that your Card Mixes use only Programs located in that same Card Bank). This could mean individually storing some Programs to or from a Card. Although this is very limiting, it makes things much simpler in the long run.

MORE ABOUT SRAM CARDS

As mentioned before, all card bank storage/retrieval should be carried out in slot A. This assures that when the bank is loaded back into the User bank from the card, the Programs and Mixes within the User bank will be able to find the samples and Programs which originally resided on a card in the A or B slot. This is particularly important for Sounds (samples) which point to the A slot. If the banks are stored to slot B and then reloaded, Programs which used to look to the A slot will look to the B slot for their samples.

Note: If this is done by accident, the SRAM card can be taken out of slot B, placed in slot A, and the bank in question can be loaded into the User bank. This will properly point the Sounds to both the A and B slot.

SRAM CARDS AND MIX MODE

When a Mix is created using Card programs, it counts the number of banks on slot A's card before assigning a number to the first bank on slot B's card. If you remove Card A and then call up the Mix in question, each MIDI channel within the Mix which originally pointed to a Card bank will have its Program Bank number altered by the number of banks which were on Card A. In this example, the Mix will automatically add that number to the Card Program banks within the Mix and point all of those Programs to the wrong place. In other words, if Card A had one bank on it and is removed after the Mix is stored, a Channel within a Mix which used to point to Card A-1 will point to Card B-1, B-1 will point to B-2, and so on.

Likewise, if you plug a Card into slot A when none had been there at the time you stored the Mix, the Card banks within the Mix will be decremented by the same number of banks that exist on the Card you plugged into slot A. If a single-banked ROM card is plugged into slot A in this scenario, then within the Mix Bank B-1 would become A-1, B-2 would become B-1, and so on.

If you plug a Card into Slot A which has more banks than the Card which used to be there, this effect will be even more pronounced. For example, plugging an SRAM Card which has 4 banks into slot A when a ROM card with one bank had been there before will throw the Card Bank indicators off by 3 banks.

Note: this does not affect channels within the Mix which had been pointing to User or Preset Program banks.